

LONESTAR NEWS

SPECIAL TROOPS BATTALION, 2BDE

FOB KALSU, IRAQ



December 2005



Words from Lone Star 6

Salam alekum (which is the standard greeting in this part of the world, meaning peace be with you),

Hello to all the friends and families of the Lonestar Battalion. We all made it safely to Kuwait after many hours flying around the world. Our send off was impressive and moving and I thank the families who traveled from all corners of the country to see your Soldier off. I ask for your continued support over the next year, as our days will be long and missions challenging, while trying to create a secure environment for the people of Iraq.

We've been in Kuwait for almost two weeks with some of our Soldier's approaching one month. We hit the ground running, attending mandatory classes about Improvised Explosive Devices (IED), and every Soldier shot their weapon to gain that last bit of confidence needed before we begin our mission in Iraq. We are ready and confident thanks to all the hard work of the Soldiers, noncommissioned officers and officers of the battalion. Many of the Soldiers in the battalion had the opportunity to train during a three day intensive convoy live fire exercise. They learned the latest techniques to identify IEDs, react to them and operate on the challenging road conditions that exist in the countryside and cities of Iraq.

Included in the training was close marksmanship training, where we shot quickly at targets as close as 10 feet away and out to 75 feet. This was a tremendous confidence builder. Additionally, we had Soldiers fire at a range designed to replicate a check point and entry control point. Those of the battalion that will train Iraqis learned about and fired foreign weapons. Soldiers learned the rules of engagement and how to prevent inadvertent shootings, using what we call escalation of force procedures. All of this is designed to help us maintain the support of the populace, but remain vigilant in case insurgents attack and we have to respond.

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Reenlistments

SSG Green SGT Patterson SPC Burch SPC Thompson, J.
SGT Brown, W SPC Brewer SSG Hernandez
SPC Rhome SSG Maples SGT Stoneburner
SGT Killion SGT Giselsbach SSG Madison

Promotions

1LT Hampton PFC Braiser SSG Waan
1LT Hoberg PFC Sanderlin
1LT Judy PFC Santana
1LT Olzacki SGT Salceda
1LT Williams SSG Harrison

Births

SGT Shakir PFC Merritt

OIF Mailing Addresses

FOB Kalsu:

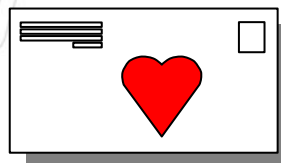
SPC John Doe
Company, STB, 2BCT, 4ID
Unit # 40503
APO, AE 09312 - 0503

FOB Duke:

SPC John Doe
Company, STB, 2BCT, 4ID in duty with 204th FSB
Unit # 43501
APO, AE 09329-3501

FOB Charlie:

SPC John Doe
Company, STB, 2BCT, 4ID in duty with 1-10 CAV
Unit # 60801
APO, AE 09332-0801



While all the training was occurring, we unpacked our containers, checked out our vehicles from the long boat ride, and reconfigured the loads for our first Combat Patrol to move personnel and equipment north into Iraq. Bulldogs validated their signal equipment during a three day, 24 hour operation to insure that the equipment works properly, allowing us to communicate in this part of the world. The Stalkers also validated their intelligence systems and are aggressively flying the Shadow UAV so we can provide critical support once we hit the ground in Iraq. Hurricanes helped repair the vehicles, get our digital systems operational in the vehicles, draw and distribute ammunition and care for the varying colds and crud some caught here in Kuwait. Their work provides the life blood for the battalion.

We had over 12 Soldiers reenlist during this short time in Kuwait. Reenlisting in Kuwait allows the Soldier to receive their bonus tax free. This allows the Soldier and families to keep the hard earned money. Congrats to all of them for choosing to stay in the Army and support our nation. We're honored and privileged to have them in the Lonestar battalion

By now each of your Soldier's should have called or emailed you or someone in your family. Over the next few weeks, there may be a time when you may not hear from your Soldier for awhile. It will take time to move up North and get settled in. The good news is we have our mailing addresses. Listed in the newsletter is the address for FOB Kalsu. Some Soldiers may be living on other Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) and will give you the specific info for the letter/package to make it to them. Nevertheless, if you are in doubt, send it to Kalsu and we'll get it to your Soldier.

I asked one of our young Soldiers to write about his trip so far. You might enjoy hearing things from his perspective. Here it is.

PRIVATE TALK

28 Nov 05, I said goodbye to my mother over the phone. Even though she is only about three hours away, we both know that in less than forty eight hours she will be thousands of miles away. I am a private in the United States military, and in about 12 hours I will be shipping to Kuwait. I hang up the phone with my mother still in tears. She may still be crying but I know she will be alright. She knows from the many long talks, why I am going, as do I. My country, my colleagues, and my family deserve it, and at this point they need it.

We have a formation about 1500. Most of the Soldiers have families there. There was a lot of crying, and surprisingly a lot of laughing. Seemed like most people understood and were accepting of their Soldier going.

As we marched away from the HHC STB company area, the last thing that I remember hearing were the yells and hollers from the crowd of families. All of which had now gone from waiting to send their loved ones off, to waiting for them to get back. With God's blessing, they all will.

We board a 777 bound for Kuwait. Most of the Soldiers are nervous, but everyone seems to be handling it in a good way. This is when I found out about plane surfing. Maybe I shouldn't explain, but it was definitely the most entertaining flight that I had been on, considering the place it was headed. The flight was very long, about twenty four hours or so. My butt has never hurt so much. I don't know how comfortable the other Soldiers were, but I think I only slept for about twenty minutes of the whole flight. I am about six foot three, and had about three foot of leg room. To be honest I was happy to get to Kuwait. Upon arrival we were sent not twenty feet from the plane straight to a bus which would eventually, after a two and a half hour bus ride, take us into the camp.

We have been here for about six days now, and to be honest it really hasn't been all that bad. Yeah, there is no beer, or parties. (Hey I'm only 22). But there is a PX, which is not too bad. They have pretty much everything that you need and tons of stuff that you don't. There is a Taco Bell, which I would never have expected. They have a jewelry store, which is for marriages to be. And a donut shop. To be honest, it doesn't really seem like we're out of the US. You can have a donut in the morning, a taco in the afternoon, and if your day just goes that good you can get engaged in the night. Though, even with all the wonders of the outside world coming in, there is a constant "knowing" of why were here, and what were here to do. The NCO's and Officers have done a good job of not letting us forget that.

Well I should be leaving for Iraq in the next few days. I have to say I have all the confidence in the world in what we're about to do and our ability to do it. If I could sum my last week up in just a few words, "This is the first roller coaster I've been on, that I feel, actually has a true destination".

Great insight and words of wisdom from one of our young Soldiers. As we approach the holidays I want to say the best gift we can have is your thoughts and prayers for us on a daily basis. We'll write when we get up north. Have a great holiday season and we all look forward to the promises that 2006 will bring, one of Peace and a speedy return home.

Shukran (thanks) for all you do.

Lone Star 6



Promotion in the desert: PFC's Brasier, Sanderlin, and Santana being promoted in Kuwait



No more butter bar: LTC Muraski "pins on" velcro rank on newly 1LT Hampton



Train as you fight: STB Soldiers practice Close Quarters Marksmanship and Reflexive Firing in the desert of Kuwait



Rolling out: SPC Rubilar prepares to ground convoy into Iraq

Tax Free!: CPT Everingham reenlists his Soldiers

